What is claimed is:

1. A method for exchanging data between a source location and a destination location comprising the steps of:

5   generating a data file with a markup language in accordance with a predetermined schema;

generating a first software envelope containing the data file;

transmitting the software envelope to the destination location; and

creating an object from the data file with a plugin object corresponding to the predetermined

schema.

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2. The method of claim 2, further including the step of:

automatically generating a second software envelope from the information contained in the

first software envelope.

15   3. The method of claim 2, wherein the first software envelope contains destination and source

address information and

wherein the step of automatically generating a second envelope includes generating a second

envelope having a destination address matching the source address of the first envelope.

20   4. The method of claim 2, wherein the first software envelope contains state information and

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wherein the step of automatically generating a second envelope includes generating a second

envelope having a destination address determined by the state information.

5. The method of claim 1, wherein the markup language comprises extensible markup language

(XML).

6. The method of claim 1, wherein the markup language comprises standard generalized markup

language (SGML).

7. The method of claim 1, wherein the step of transmitting comprises transmitting the software

envelope via electronic mail.

8. The method of claim 1, wherein the step of transmitting comprises transmitting the software

envelope via HTTP.

9. The method of claim 1, wherein the step of transmitting comprises transmitting the software

envelope via an intermediate server.

10. A computer readable medium having computer-executable instructions for performing the steps

recited in claim 1.

11. A computer-readable medium having stored thereon a data structure comprising:

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(a) a data field containing address information;

(b) a data field containing the identification of a predetermined schema; and

(c) a data field containing a data file formatted in a markup language in accordance with the schema.

12. The computer readable medium of claim 11, further including:

(d) a data field containing manifest information corresponding to the information contained in the data file data field.

13. The computer readable medium of claim 11, further including:

(d) a data field containing state information.

14. The computer readable medium of claim 13, wherein the state information contains address information.

15. The computer readable medium of claim 11, wherein the address information contains an address for replying to a message.

16. A method for creating data at a source location to transmit to a destination location comprising the steps of:

generating a data file with a markup language in accordance with a predetermined schema;

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identifying a plugin object that creates an object from the data file;

generating a software envelope containing the data file; and

transmitting the software envelope to the destination location.

5   17. The method of claim 16, wherein the step of generating a software envelope includes generating

a software envelope containing the data file and the plugin object.

18. The method of claim 16, wherein the markup language comprises extensible markup language

(XML).

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19. The method of claim 16, wherein the markup language comprises standard generalized markup

language (SGML).

20. A method for extracting data from a file transmitted from a source location comprising the steps

15   of:

receiving a software envelope containing a data file marked up with a markup language in

accordance with a predetermined schema; and

creating an object from the data file with a plugin object corresponding to the predetermined

schema.

20   21. The method of claim 20, wherein the markup language comprises extensible markup language

(XML).

22. The method of claim 20, wherein the markup language comprises standard generalized markup

language (SGML).